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San Francisco—A City Connected to the Arts

THE ARTS ARE PART OF OUR NEIGHBORHOODS, PART OF OUR SUCCESS

SAN FRANCISCO IS AN ARTS INCUBATOR. WE KNOW THAT ART OF ALL KINDS CAN RENEW OUR NEIGHBORHOODS, CREATE JOBS, AND HELP US CREATE A FUTURE BALANCED WITH DISCIPLINE AND GENEROSITY. HERE'S HOW WE CAN NURTURE THAT LEGACY FOR TOMORROW'S AUDIENCES AND ARTISTS.

Exploratorium and the Presidio

WE NEED TO BE FLEXIBLE SO THIS AREA CAN GROW, CHANGE AND ADAPT. THOSE OF US WHO LIVE IN THE SURROUNDING AREAS ARE LEERY OF INCREASED TRAFFIC; WE NEED TO THINK OF OTHER TRANSIT, LIKE FERRIES, OR BETTER CONNECTIONS TO EXISTING TRANSIT.

Fort Mason

ONE OF OUR BEST ARTS INCUBATORS WITH THEATRES, GALLERIES AND MUSEUMS. BUT THE FREQUENTLY PACKED LOT MEANS WE NEED TO HANDLE OVERFLOW TRAFFIC AND IMPROVE TRANSIT CONNECTIONS, SUCH AS THE RAIL TUNNEL, FERRY SERVICE, ETC. OPTIONS THAT WON'T UPSET THOSE OF US WHO LIVE NEARBY.

Union Square/Geary Street

THE MAJOR THEATRES AND GALLERIES HERE ARE WELL SERVED BY TRANSIT. THERE IS A LIVELY STREET LIFE AND PARKING IS FAIRLY GOOD, BUT WE PERCEIVE THAT IT MAY NOT BE SAFE. SO LET'S GET STRONGER MANAGEMENT, LIKE A BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT, THAT KEEPS THE STREETS SAFER AND CLEANER.

Mid-Market/Tenderloin

THIS AREA HAS GREAT POTENTIAL BECAUSE IT IS ON A MAJOR TRANSIT CORRIDOR BETWEEN CIVIC CENTER AND THE FINANCIAL DISTRICT. BUT THE STREETS DON'T FEEL SAFE OR CLEAN. WE NEED COORDINATED IMPROVEMENT AND INCREASED PARKING.

Fillmore/Western Addition

THIS AREA IS A GREAT RESOURCE. LET'S ALL HELP MAKE THE JAZZ DISTRICT PROSPER!

Palace of the Legion of Honor

A GOOD EXAMPLE OF WHAT CAN BE DONE; THE MUSEUM WAS RECENTLY EXPANDED AND REFURBISHED. MOST OF US WILL CONTINUE TO GO THERE BY CAR, GIVEN ITS LOCATION.

YBC-SOMA/Sixth Street

THIS IS A NEW DISTRICT WITH MUSEUMS AND PERFORMING ARTS. YBC NEEDS TO HELP IMPROVE THE PEDESTRIAN EXPERIENCE SO WE DON'T FEEL TRAPPED ON NARROW SIDEWALKS CRAMMED UP AGAINST HEAVY TRAFFIC. THOSE OF US WHO LIVE AND WORK IN THE AREA AROUND 6TH STREET SHOULD ORGANIZE TO IMPROVE ITS SAFETY AND CLEANLINESS.

Third Street Corridor

THE PLANNED LIGHT RAIL LINK HERE REPRESENTS A MAJOR PUBLIC INVESTMENT THAT COULD REINFORCE POTENTIAL USES BY ARTS AND EDUCATIONAL GROUPS.

Golden Gate Park Concourse

THE MAJOR INSTITUTIONS (DEYOUNG, ACADEMY OF SCIENCES) NEED US TO MAKE A DECISION NOW ON WHETHER OR NOT THEY STAY IN THE PARK. THE PARK NEEDS LOTS OF ACTIVITY IN IT TO BE SAFE, SO IF THE EXISTING INSTITUTIONS GO, WHAT DO WE WANT IN THEIR PLACE? TRANSIT TO THE PARK NEEDS IMPROVEMENT, BUT GIVEN THE LOCATION, MOST OF US IN THE CITY AND IN THE REGION WILL CONTINUE TO GO BY CAR. WE NEED TO RETHINK THE AREA AROUND THE CONCOURSE SO SOME OF US CAN BIKE OR SKATE AND SOME OF US CAN DRIVE TO THE CULTURAL INSTITUTIONS.

Mission District/Valencia Corridor/16th St./24th St.

THESE AREAS HAVE GALLERIES, DANCE, AND THEATRE GROUPS. GOOD TRANSIT IS COMPROMISED BY THE PERCEPTION THAT SOME AREAS ARE NOT SAFE. A BIG PUSH IS NEEDED TO WELCOME PEOPLE BACK WITH CLEANER AND SAFER STREETS AND BETTER INFORMATION ABOUT EVENT LOCATIONS, WHERE TO PARK OR HOW TO USE TRANSIT. THE AFFORDABILITY OF THIS NEIGHBORHOOD ATTRACTED A TERRIFIC COMMUNITY OF CULTURAL GROUPS, BUT THEIR VERY SUCCESS IS LEADING TO RISING RENTS.

Civic Center

MANY OF OUR MAJOR PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS (CITY HALL, OPERA, SYMPHONY, BALLET, THEATRES) ARE HERE AND WE'RE INVESTING HEAVILY IN THEIR IMPROVEMENT. IT IS AN ARCHITECTURALLY IMPORTANT BEAUX ARTS ENSEMBLE, WITH GOOD PARKING AND GOOD PUBLIC TRANSIT, BUT OFTEN PERCEIVED AS NOT SAFE OR CLEAN. THIS SHOULD BE A PLACE WHERE WE CAN GATHER AROUND IMPORTANT ISSUES OR FESTIVITIES. CIVIC CENTER NEEDS PROFESSIONAL MANAGEMENT TO BRING IN A PROGRAM OF DIVERSE ACTIVITIES TO ENLIVEN THE AREA DURING THE DAY AND EVENING. BROOKS HALL AND THE CIVIC AUDITORIUM SHOULD BE CONTRIBUTING TO THE ACTIVITY IN THE PLAZA.

Bayview/Hunters Point

THERE IS A VIBRANT COMMUNITY OF ARTISTS WORKING HERE IN GREAT BUT RUNDOWN BUILDINGS, STRONG COMMUNITY CENTER, AND THE BAYVIEW OPERA HOUSE. THE AREA HAS POOR TRANSIT SERVICE TO MANY LOCATIONS, BUT THIS WILL IMPROVE WITH THE THIRD STREET LIGHT RAIL. THERE IS A PUBLIC PLAN FOR THE AREA THAT WE SHOULD SUPPORT BECAUSE IT STRONGLY REINFORCES THIS COMMUNITY.

McLaren Park

THIS IS A BIG PARK, OFTEN FORGOTTEN. A JOINT USE WITH AN ARTS OR EDUCATION GROUP WOULD WELCOME PEOPLE IN.

San Francisco Planning and Urban Research Association (SPUR) - a nationally respected civic planning organization; non-profit, with a membership of over 1,000 citizens, businesses, and government representatives. We develop informed and innovative solutions to urban problems by educating the public, building consensus, and spurring the government to act.
tel. 415/781-8726; fax 415/781-7291; website: http://www.spur.org; email: spur@well.com; 312 Sutter St., S.F.,CA 94108-4305

LINE ART BY PETER HASSELMAN

Workshop Panelists:

BILL EAGER,
president of the transportation consulting firm TDA Inc., Seattle, WA., and Trustee of the Urban Land Institute.

CAROL JOHNSON,
president of the landscape architecture and site planning firm Carol R. Johnson Associates, Inc., Cambridge, MA., and former instructor at the Harvard Graduate School of Design,

JOHN KREIDLER,
senior program executive for arts and humanities, The San Francisco Foundation, San Francisco.

STEVE POLLOCK,
vice president of the theatre and media facilities design firm, Auerbach & Associates, San Francisco.

STEVE SPICKARD,
managing principal of Economic Research Associates, San Francisco.

WARREN SUMNERS,
CEO of three major regional performing arts centers, Tampa, Fl.

San Francisco City Departments:

Gerald Green, Planning Department
Joel Robinson, Recreation and Park Department
Bill Maher, Parking and Traffic Department
Jim Morales, Redevelopment Agency
Helen Sause, Redevelopment Agency
Jorge Alfaro, Dept. of Public Works
Carmen Clark, Transportation Authority
José Luis Moscovich, Transportation Authority

Arts and Cultural Organizations:

John Killacky, Yerba Buena Center for the Arts
Patrick Kociolek, California Academy of Sciences
Robert Sweibel, American Conservatory Theater
Goery Delacote, Exploratorium
Rick Harrell, San Francisco Opera
Maria X Martinez, arts advocate
Harry Parker, Fine Arts Museums
Bonnie Levinson, Museum of Modern Art
Wayne Hazzard, Dancers' Group
Adele Prandini, Theater Rhinoceros
Dave Eakin, George Coates Performance Works
Stanley Williams, Lorraine Hansberry Theater
Ellen Gavin, BRAVA! For Women in the Arts
Petra Schumann, ArtSpan/ San Francisco Open Studios
Germaine Juneau, International Children's Art Museum
Deborah Cullinan, Intersection for the Arts
Randall Klein, Jazz in the City
Ruth Felt, San Francisco Performances
Julie Chang, Carson Woo, Chinatown Community Center
Jack Davis, SOMAR
Susan Cervantes, Precita Eyes Mural Arts Center
Lorraine García-Nakata, Mexican Museum
Gemma Cubero, Women's Building
Michael Copeland-Sydnor, African American Historical and Cultural Society
Kola Thomas, Center for African and African American Art and Culture
Lauren Hewitt, Jon Sims Center for the Performing Arts

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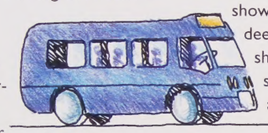
IN FEBRUARY 1998 A REMARKABLE GATHERING TOOK PLACE - THE FIRST EVER COMPREHENSIVE LOOK AT THE ARTS IN SAN FRANCISCO AS AN INTEGRATED WHOLE. THE OUTCOME, DESCRIBED IN THIS PAPER, IS A PARTNERSHIP AMONG ARTS ORGANIZATIONS, CITY DEPARTMENTS, AND THOSE OF US WHO LIVE IN THE NEIGHBORHOODS. A PARTNERSHIP THAT WILL ENERGIZE THE COMMUNITY.

Art is a defining element of San Francisco, we are known nation-wide as a city friendly to artists. There is tremendous vitality - from museums to community cultural centers to street festivals. We have over 400 arts organizations (as many as Los Angeles, which is eight times larger!) and bring in more per capita grants from the NEA than any other American city.

San Francisco's connection to art and cultural education is best served when we grasp the urban planning issues of access, location and program expansion. To make good decisions, whether we are public officials or voters, we must first understand that the arts form an "ecosystem" of small and large, experimental and established organizations. Some concentrate on serving artists; others aim to build a wider audience. Some aspire to their own building; others have different priorities. Many smaller groups have been active for over twenty years, surviving with dedication and talent.



One byproduct of this natural process in San Francisco's evolution is that the arts often serve as the pioneer in stimulating the rebirth of a neighborhood. As more arts activities gather, the quality of neighborhood life improves, the area becomes safer and more pleasant, property values rise, and rents increase. Ironically, some of the pioneering arts organizations end up having to move out of their neighborhood because they can no longer afford the rent.

A snapshot of the arts in San Francisco shows the different stages of the development process and the different problems these groups are facing. Emerging arts groups in the Mission/ Valencia corridor and groups south of Market find their biggest urban concerns are the safety and cleanliness of surrounding streets, which affects how and if people come. More established institutions located in the Marina and Golden Gate Park are concerned with the inability of many people to get to their institutions because of parking and street closures (including closure to buses).

Experimental arts groups will naturally move around. Sometimes the move is an unwanted "push" from a gentrifying area to a less expensive neighborhood. Other times, the group is "pulled" to a location to be near other compatible arts and commercial services, patrons (or the transportation system patrons use), better or bigger space, or less expensive space.

So how do we protect this valuable facet of our city as funding gets more difficult and the cost of living is rising for everybody?

Access

Arts activities flourish when access is easy and safe. We must improve signage, parking, and transit for cultural destinations. Which means visible street signs, directional signs, district signs, directions at bus stops and parking areas, etc. Then we need good transit which includes reliable buses, more taxis or shuttles and good parking. The area around the event should feel clean and safe, otherwise we won't go, or we will drive and try to park very close.

Location

Urban neighborhoods are an important part of a cultural event, their amenities enhance the experience for us, before and after the visit. In return, arts organizations must understand the critical importance of becoming part of their neighborhoods, of giving back.

For many cultural organizations, owning a building or having long-term access to a space represents stability. City departments should coordinate with the arts organizations to create the incentives that are needed to encourage below market rate space and that allow some flexibility in land use and building regulations. These are ultimately repaid because arts organizations help revitalize neighborhoods.

Large urban parks exist to offer diverse terrain and a variety of features and activities. They should be well maintained and policed because they are not intended to be wilderness areas. They need high density housing on their edges or activity generators in their interiors. Cultural institutions, well integrated into a park, are an important generator of visitors to the park. As we all know, an empty park is not a safe park.

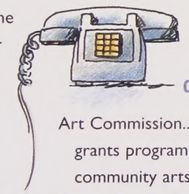
Program Needs

Organizations need the flexibility to embrace programs for children and adults. Depending on the organization, this may involve temporary spaces or shared spaces. For larger institutions, it may involve blockbuster shows to generate the revenue that allows them to broaden and deepen their collections or expertise. Gift and book shops, cafes or small cinemas also create revenue streams that promote self-sufficiency. We need to appreciate how these amenities are critical to the survival of the organizations.

Here's what we can do:

All solutions start in our neighborhoods. We must work together. The more disengaged we are the less power we have. We can adopt our block, support neighborhood organizations, write letters to our officials, agitate at commission hearings, vote.

We need to protect existing funding commitments. The visitor industry and hotels give substantially to the arts. The hotel tax fund is a major contributor to arts organizations. We must let the supervisors know how valuable we think this is and work to support its continuance. San Francisco city departments can play a significant role in the arts community - especially when we make it clear that we think it is important. They also have abundant information and a variety of programs that offer support.



Here is a partial list of departments and resources:

Art Commission	252-2590
grants program	252-2553
community arts and education	252-2598
Grants for the Arts	554-6710
Board of Supervisors	554-5184
Building Inspection	558-6088
Graffiti hotline	241-WASH
Office of the Mayor	554-6141
Mayor's Office of Neighborhood Services	554-7111
Street closures, signs, curb painting	554-2300
Planning Department	558-6377
To find your local police station	553-1527
PUC street lighting	554-0730
PG&E street lighting	1-800-743-5000
Street cleaning	695-2017

Once we have organized to tackle the issues, City departments and arts organizations must join in to ensure the City's continued vitality. Here are a few ideas to get us started.

What We Can Do

Issue	City Department	Arts Organization
Access		
Taxis Reorganize the whole system. We do not have enough taxis for residents or visitors, especially during peak business or entertainment hours; drivers are poorly trained.	**Transportation Authority**—Quickly do a study and make recommendations. Consider district licenses. **The Board of Supervisors and the Police Commission**—Support the recommendations.	**Lobby** the Board of Supervisors and the Mayor's Office for better taxi service.
Shuttles Allow shuttles to become another mode of transit in the city.	**Transportation Authority**—Shuttles should be part of the taxi study. **P.U.C.**—Relax regulations so that shuttles become part of a multi-modal transportation system.	**Lobby for the change.** Then make your own arrangements with the shuttle operators; government management is not needed. **Be creative**—Set up tickets, meals, and transportation as a package to improve access and increase income.
MUNI Reorganize to have one manager, a guaranteed income stream, and links with other transit systems.	**Mayor's Office**—Place a charter amendment on the fall ballot to reorganize MUNI. **MUNI—**Put signs at every transit stop and inside every bus, streetcar, etc. that give route information and places of interest.	**Get a copy of SPUR's recommendations** for MUNI (781-8726); push for its adoption. **Vote.** **Lobby** at Commission meetings and Board of Supervisors for better transit and to have the arts institutions and districts considered when routes are planned.
Parking In the last decade there was a 2.2% increase in the number of households; a 16.5% increase in the number of cars. We increasingly use our cars for several destinations in one trip, often circling neighborhoods looking for a parking space.	**Board of Supervisors, Parking and Traffic, Rec. & Park**—Implement more effective parking information and management. Create incentives that allow well designed parking garages and encourage pricing that manages where and when we park.	**Work with the community and the departments** to make parking fit into the neighborhood, e.g. parking on the top with retail at the ground floor; or using vacant lots as interim parking, etc. Consider narrowing streets with diagonal parking and bike lanes.
Safety Any transportation choice is compromised if we don't feel safe getting to or being in a neighborhood.	**All city departments , especially DPW, Social Services, Police**—Coordinate to make our streets cleaner and safer.	**Work with your local communities to push for needed improvements.** Take responsibility for cleaning your street and sidewalk.
Location		
Land Use We need to recognize the spontaneous emergence of arts districts, strengthen their identity and facilitate the location of compatible uses.	**Planning Dept.**—Develop an "arts use" which facilitates and expedites use and adaptive reuse of existing sites. **Mayor**—Create a central information point to aid arts organizations trying to locate or expand. **Mayor and School Supt.**—Develop a working partnership between the schools and the arts community to allow uses during after school hours.	**Understand the community**—Rents, transportation, amenities-before locating there. **Become a partner** with neighbors. **Develop some programs** that are relevant to the immediate neighborhood.
Pedestrian Environment Sidewalks and streets should have a "sense of place".	**Planning Dept., DPW**—Help implement plans for street furniture, signage, crosswalks, lighting and facades that enliven streets.	**Get the Area and Neighborhood Plans** from the Planning Dept. and help get them implemented.
Building Codes Restrictive codes can create prohibitive costs for arts organizations. Public safety should be protected, but other codes might be relaxed, as appropriate.	**Police Dept.**—Streamline conditional use permits for temporary facilities for festivals and parades. Planning, Building, and Fire—Encourage adaptive reuse by emphasizing life safety evaluation for occupancy of 150 or less.	**Lobby the departments and Board of Supervisors.** Understand the intent of building codes; be creative about compliance with that intent.
Taxes Prop 13 was especially devastating to our arts organizations and arts programs in the schools.	**Maintain the hotel tax fund; Board of Supervisors—**Encourage city departments to form public-private partnerships that boost support for the arts.	**Educate yourself** and your neighbors about the hotel tax fund. **Get out the vote** for improvements to infrastructure, programs that support the arts, and funding for affordable housing.
Program		
Education Audience demands and artists voices change over time. The effect on programs can mean different venues, larger audiences, and greater outreach.	**Relevant city departments (Planning, Redevelopment, Rec. & Park, etc.)**—Make your expertise and resources known to the arts community for their strategic planning.	**Find out what resources are available** beforehand, use them to form partnerships to meet your goals. **Support the new Arts High School.** Create mutual opportunities with the students. **Advocate** for wider public school programming.
Marketing Better communication is crucial to the future of arts organizations. "Guilt" will not get money or audiences. Businesses contribute as part of their marketing strategy; audiences go because its fun, provocative, or interesting.	**The Art Commission**—Actively market the arts; match the organizations to public needs.	**Use the Art Commission, local universities, and P.R. firms** to market your events and create broader awareness. **Get the Arts Monthly** distributed in daily and neighborhood newspapers.
Partnerships Power and credibility grow with numbers.	**The Convention and Visitors Bureau**—Promote events that are uniquely San Franciscan. Extend outreach to those of us who live in S.F. since we also bring in visitors.	**Give special attention** to the hospitality industry (invitations and discounts to events). **Develop links** with other organizations through events, web sites, joint promotions. **Put neighborhood representatives** on your board.

If you would like to become active in promoting these solutions, send us the enclosed card. Together we can open the door to good decisions.

SPUR